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# Service: A Way of Life at Andrews Academy

BY MARK BECKER

**O**n a beautiful autumn day, 10 groups of Andrews Academy (AA) students and teachers stepped out of the classroom and into the community for a day of service, a long-standing tradition at the academy.

Alvin Glassford, religion/outreach teacher and organizer of "Community Service Day," took his group of 17 to Warren Dunes State Park to pick up clay tiles and other trash that had been dumped in a creek bed. According to Alvin, permission for this project was granted because of Andrews Academy's reputation from previous years.

Bronson Elementary School in Benton Harbor. "When I saw the effect it had on the students at both Sterne Bronson and the academy, it brought tears to my eyes," Sherita said.

Two similar activities involved the Benton Harbor Salvation Army and the Adventist Community Service center in Berrien Springs. Most of the students at these sites were responsible for sorting and organizing clothes or weeding the parking lots.

But service at AA was not limited to one day last semester. Students' willingness to be involved in service is evidenced

organized a "Random Acts of Kindness" club which raked leaves for senior citizens and has done other acts of kindness.

Service to others can also come in the form of a note sent to someone in a time of need. In a number of English classes, students write notes to those who may be struggling mentally, emotionally, or physically; who have lost someone close to them; or who are fighting illness. These students are learning to use language in a variety of contexts and to recognize the power of communication to effect change in people's lives.

"These acts of service are



*Joel Harris and Peter Robinson help organize sale items at a women's shelter.*



*Kim Amor, art teacher, works in the Dowagiac Woods.*



*Erika Fortin carries a box of sorted clothing at the Adventist Community Service center.*



*Andy Jones works with students at Benton Harbor's Sterne Bronson Elementary School.*

One group went to Dowagiac Woods with Kim Amor, art teacher, where they cleared the forest floor of dead trees and straightened bent saplings. "They had a ball," Kim said. Rebecca Wright, English teacher, went with her group to Andrews University to work on the grounds. "It's hot, hard, sweaty work," she said. "I tell my students, 'It's more about serving other people, and that makes it all worthwhile.'"

Math teacher Sherita Moses-Whitlow's group tutored second-through fifth-graders at Sterne

by their initiation of the Ezekiel Project which continues to collect funds to finance a young Dominican boy's education and living expenses. Also this fall, the Friendship Team class organized a food and clothing drive for a local homeless shelter. Students filled a truck to overflowing with their contributions. The One Can Drive also benefited the homeless shelter with food items collected by students who took a Friday afternoon, going door-to-door, giving the community a chance to help. A few weeks later, students

illustrations of the way God is moving the hearts of our young people at Andrews Academy to make a significant difference in their own corner of the world," says Clemen Sheppard, Spanish teacher and librarian. The community, the faculty, and the students have benefited, and will continue to benefit, because service has become a way of life for many at Andrews Academy.

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*Mark Becker is Andrews Academy's marketing director.*